

Message

From: Lippert, Allison [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=6255CC36A54F4FFDBF0D8EBC24BF5F45-ANOWOTAR]
Sent: 6/21/2018 10:20:10 PM
To: Newman, Katelyn [KNewman@usnews.com]
CC: Singer, Joshua [Singer.Joshua@epa.gov]
Subject: RE: USNWR inquiry: private well contamination in NE Wisconsin

Hi Katelyn – please see our responses below, attributable to EPA or an agency spokesperson. Please contact Josh Singer, copied here, if you have additional questions.

What was the EPA's response to the petition in October 2014 from local groups in northeast Wisconsin concerning contaminated private well water?

Following discussions with EPA, WDNR formed a Groundwater Collaboration Workgroup to identify solutions that would help in solving the problems in Kewaunee County with contamination of groundwater and private wells. EPA actively participated in each of the workgroups and the June 2016 final report is being implemented by workgroup participants. EPA regularly met with petitioners, WDNR, local officials, farmers, and other stakeholders to work toward solutions. These discussions resulted in WDNR offering emergency supplies of drinking water to residents with wells contaminated by fecal bacteria from livestock.

EPA participated in the Technical Advisory Committee for proposed amendments to strengthen Wisconsin administrative rules governing the land application of manure in sensitive areas of the state, including Kewaunee County ("NR 151"). EPA staff have also focused on assessing compliance with the Clean Water Act and federal regulations applicable to large concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) in Kewaunee County.

Why was this the response taken?

Kewaunee County has areas of karst geology with fractured bedrock close to the soil surface, which can allow contaminants to quickly reach underground sources of drinking water. This unique geology presents manure management challenges. Confronting these challenges requires engagement by all levels of government, the agricultural community, concerned citizens, and others.

Recently, the EPA has been involved in cleaning up a well contamination issue in central Wisconsin, but hasn't made it to Kewaunee – why is that?

EPA continues to monitor the situation in both areas.

From: Newman, Katelyn [mailto:KNewman@usnews.com]
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2018 10:19 AM
To: Lippert, Allison <lippert.allison@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: USNWR inquiry: private well contamination in NE Wisconsin

Great – thank you, Allison!

From: "Lippert, Allison" <lippert.allison@epa.gov>
Date: Thursday, June 21, 2018 at 10:52 AM
To: "Newman, Katelyn" <KNewman@usnews.com>
Subject: Re: USNWR inquiry: private well contamination in NE Wisconsin

Hi Katelyn - we are working on responses. I hope to have something for you later today.

Allison Lippert
U.S. EPA Region 5
312-353-0967

On Jun 20, 2018, at 4:30 PM, Newman, Katelyn <KNewman@usnews.com> wrote:

Hi Allison,

I wanted to check in again – can we orchestrate an interview or quotes for the questions below?

1. Citizens and local groups from northeast Wisconsin petitioned the EPA in October 2014 concerning contaminated private well water. To my knowledge, the EPA has never publicly acknowledged the petition, but instead instructed the Wisconsin DNR to address it. Why was this quieter response taken?
2. Recently, the EPA has been involved in addressing a well contamination issue in the Central Sands region of Wisconsin, but hasn't made it to Kewaunee – why is that?
3. Kewaunee County residents have continued to call on WI DNR and the EPA to open the door for emergency water supplies for people with contaminated wells, but there has been little movement on that front. Why hasn't that happened/what is required for this emergency water to be granted by the EPA?

I look forward to hearing from you, and thanks in advance for your time.

Best,
Katelyn

From: "Newman, Katelyn" <KNewman@usnews.com>
Date: Friday, June 15, 2018 at 4:20 PM
To: "Lippert, Allison" <lippert.allison@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: USNWR inquiry: private well contamination in NE Wisconsin

Hi Allison,

Trying to work that out with my editor now, actually. I'm aiming for end of next week, though that's more an estimate than a definite at the moment.

Thanks!
Katelyn

From: "Lippert, Allison" <lippert.allison@epa.gov>
Date: Friday, June 15, 2018 at 4:06 PM
To: "Newman, Katelyn" <KNewman@usnews.com>
Subject: RE: USNWR inquiry: private well contamination in NE Wisconsin

Hi Katelyn – apologies for the delay, what's your hard deadline?

Allison Lippert
U.S. EPA Region 5
312-353-0967

From: Newman, Katelyn [<mailto:KNewman@usnews.com>]
Sent: Friday, June 15, 2018 3:04 PM
To: Lippert, Allison <lippert.allison@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: USNWR inquiry: private well contamination in NE Wisconsin

Hi Allison,

I wanted to circle back on my email from last Friday. Let me know if Ms. Stepp or anyone else could speak on the below.

Thanks, and have a great weekend!
Best,
Katelyn

From: "Newman, Katelyn" <KNewman@usnews.com>
Date: Friday, June 8, 2018 at 1:57 PM
To: "Lippert, Allison" <lippert.allison@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: USNWR inquiry: private well contamination in NE Wisconsin

Hi Allison,

It's complicated in that Ms. Stepp was in charge of the WI DNR's response at the time that this issue came to light with the EPA in 2014. I'm not sure who would be the best person to talk to, as I think (and please correct me if I'm wrong) that the EPA's response to the petition in 2014 was essentially to push the WI DNR to address it, which would have been under Ms. Stepp's leadership. For the EPA, the main questions would be "What was the EPA's response to the petition in October 2014 from local groups in northeast Wisconsin concerning contaminated private well water? Why was this the response taken? Recently, the EPA has been involved in cleaning up a well contamination issue in central Wisconsin, but hasn't made it to Kewaunee – why is that?" Any help is much appreciated, and thanks for your help and time.

Best,
Katelyn

From: "Lippert, Allison" <lippert.allison@epa.gov>
Date: Friday, June 8, 2018 at 12:23 PM
To: "Newman, Katelyn" <KNewman@usnews.com>
Subject: RE: USNWR inquiry: private well contamination in NE Wisconsin

Hi Katelyn – do you have questions about EPA's response? Questions about the state's response should be directed to WDNR.

From: Newman, Katelyn [<mailto:KNewman@usnews.com>]
Sent: Thursday, June 7, 2018 2:48 PM
To: Lippert, Allison <lippert.allison@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: USNWR inquiry: private well contamination in NE Wisconsin

Hi Ms. Lippert,

I've been pursuing a story about well water contamination in northeast Wisconsin, particularly focusing on Kewaunee County, especially within the last 10 years. I'm looking into the local, state and federal

response to it as well. It's my understanding that Ms. Stepp was the Secretary for Wisconsin's DNR from 2011 to 2017 (upon which she assumed her EPA appointment). I'd love to talk to Ms. Stepp about the DNR's response under her leadership, the concentrated animal feeding operations in the area/working with the farmers, etc.

Thanks,
Katelyn

From: "Lippert, Allison" <lippert.allison@epa.gov>
Date: Thursday, June 7, 2018 at 3:37 PM
To: "Newman, Katelyn" <KNewman@usnews.com>
Subject: RE: USNWR inquiry: private well contamination in NE Wisconsin

Hi Katelyn,

Your inquiry was forwarded to me in EPA Region 5's press office. Can you share some more info about your story and some of the questions you have?

Thanks,

Allison Lippert
U.S. EPA Region 5
312-353-0967

Resent-From: <Press@epa.gov>
From: "Newman, Katelyn" <KNewman@usnews.com>
Date: June 7, 2018 at 3:11:45 PM EDT
To: Press <Press@epa.gov>
Subject: USNWR inquiry: private well contamination in NE Wisconsin

Hi EPA press team:

My name is Katelyn Newman and I am an environment and health reporter for U.S. News & World Report. I'm emailing you today as I'm working on a story about private well contamination in Northeast Wisconsin, and I was wondering if Ms. Stepp would be available to talk to me about it this week or next. Please let me know, and thank you in advance for your time!

Best,
Katelyn